

Learning Objectives:

- To learn the key points from History of Ahmadiyyat
- Key points on 'Blessings of Prayer' written by the Promised Messiah^(AS)
- To revise the Book Kashti e Nuh (Noah's Ark) by The Promised Messiah^(AS)

ACTIVITY HISTORY OF AHMADIYYAT

RESOURCE: Silsila Ahmadiyya by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad Sahib M.A^{ra} Pages 162-175

Below section has been translated in English by the National Lajna Ta'lim Department for the purpose of lesson plan.

Time: 30 min

Spirit of Hard Work among the youth and Tasheez-ul-Azhan publication

Promised Messiah^{as} delivered a moving address on the occasion of Jalsa Salana 1905, in which he urged the youth to step forward to fill the roles of the departing scholars of the Jamaat. His address inculcated a new spirit of service among the youth of the Jamaat and hence, at the beginning of 1906 a few Ahmadi youth joined together in Qadian to form an association. The Promised Messiah^{as} graciously named it "Tasheez-ul-Azhan", which means an association that helps sharpen the mind. The society started to convene meetings every week or every fifteen days, where it helped youth practice eloquent speech and also published a monthly magazine, also named Tasheez-ul-Azhan. The magazine published articles supporting Islam and Ahmadiyyat. The leader of the association was Hazrat Mirza Basheeruddin Mehmood Ahmad^{RA} who is presently the Imam of the Jamaat.

Apostasy of Dr Abdul Hakeem Khan and the writing of Haqiqatul-Wahi

Every divine order is followed by a series of apostasies, thus this was also witnessed during the Promised Messiah's time when Dr Abdul Hakeem, a surgeon from Patiala who defected from the Jamaat after being a loyal member for years. The main reason for his apostasy was his belief that following any messenger or prophet was not necessary for Salvation but in fact believing in God alone was sufficient. The Promised Messiah^{as} tried explaining to him numerous times that such a belief in Deity which excludes belief in divine books and prophets is very weak and in fact, non-existent. But Alas, the Promised Messiah's^{as} explanations did not benefit him and he continued to increase in opposition. As a wholehearted believer in prophecy, he also claimed that God has told him that the Promised Messiah^{as} shall be destroyed soon. At first, he set a three year period, then changed it to fourteen months and then finally changed it again to a specific date saying that the Promised Messiah^{as} shall die on the 4th of August 1908. In response Allah, the Almighty gave the Promised Messiah^{as} prophecy saying:

"The chosen ones of God show clear signs of acceptance....No one can ever defeat them....Oh my Lord, show the difference between the truthful and the false."

This was a very powerful revelation, which contained the message that not only would Abdul Hakeem's prophecy prove to be false but he shall not die until he sees clear signs of the Promised Messiah's^{as} victory and God will show the difference between the truthful and the false. The truthful will be recognised by clear signs of acceptance and the false one shall be forsaken. Therefore, this is what happened. The Promised Messiah^{as} gained success each day just as the truthful always do. On

the other hand, not only did Abdul Hakeem's prophecy proved false but he was utterly humiliated and finally died in disgrace and no one even knows of him today.

But the question raised about the belief in prophets by Abdul Hakeem was very concerning therefore, the Promisee Messiah^{as} did not just publish the revelation in response, but also wrote a book strongly opposing Abdul Hakeem's wrong views, which the Promised Messiah^{as} named "Haqiqatul-Wahi"(The philosophy of Divine revelation). This is a very detailed book which the Promised Messiah^{as} started writing in 1906 and finished in 1907. In the book the Promised Messiah^{as} has discussed the philosophy of revelation and prophecy and has highlighted the different types of revelations and their need and importance in detail. The Promised Messiah^{as} has also included his numerous signs and prophecies which were fulfilled and mentioned how his enemies suffered the wrath of God while his followers and friends were blessed abundantly.

It is a splendid book which enlightens all its non spectacle readers to the existence of God.

Revolt in Punjab and the Promised Messiah's^{as} Announcement

In 1907, a serious political crisis developed in the Punjab, which started as nationalist agenda, but the movement grew stronger and turned into a revolt. On this occasion the Promised Messiah^{as} published an advertisement in the newspaper advising his followers to remain peaceful and not to participate in the mutiny and refrain from breaking any laws. The Promised Messiah^{as} always used to urge his followers to remain loyal to the government in accordance with the Islamic teachings. The Promised Messiah's^{as} loyalty was not solely with the British government but he believed in remaining loyal to every ruling government because his teachings were based on maintaining peace and freedom of religion which is equal for everyone. But as the Promised Messiah^{as} lived under British rule and the Jamaat's centre was also situated within British Raj hence his teachings stressed more on remaining loyal to the British government.

Arya's Conference in Lahore and the writing of Chashma-e-Marfat

In the end of 1907 the Arya Samaj held a religious conference in Lahore where they invited members of different religions to attend and also requested the Promised Messiah^{as} to send an article with his views on the topic of the conference, which was "Is there a Devine book? If yes then which one". The Arya organiser assured the Promised Messiah^{as} that the conference shall be a civilised gathering and they will ensure that no ones religious sentiments are hurt. The Promised Messiah^{as} accepted the invitation and wrote an essay on the selected topic and sent it through Maulvi Nooruddin Sahib and also asked Jamaat members to attend the Conference. However, the Promised Messiah^{as} also announced that Allah, the Almighty has told him that the organisers did not have noble intentions behind the conference but God will not let them succeed in their evil endeavours. The conference was held on the 3rd December 1907 in Lahore and Maulvi Nooruddin sahib readout the Promised Messiah's^{as} essay, which was decent and effective. But when the speaker of the Arya Samaj delivered his speech, it was filthy and contained derogatory remarks about the Holy Prophet pbuh and Islam. When the Promised Messiah^{as} found out about this he felt deep anguish and was extremely upset and asked why the Jamaat members did not walk out saying that they did not attend the conference to be humiliated.

Afterwards the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote a book in response to Arya's allegation known as "Chashma-e-Marfat", which is truly enlightening, a fountain of knowledge. Not only does the book contains detailed and clear answers to the allegations against Islam by Arya Samaj but it also mentions powerful arguments against Vedic Dharm (Veda religion), which none of its followers could refute. None the less, Chashma-e-Marfat is a very comprehensive book that the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote in his last days and is an exceptional part of Jamaat literature.

The Arrival of the Financial Commissioner in Qadian and his meeting with the Promised Messiah^{as}:

In 1908 the Financial Commissioner of the Punjab, Sir James Wilson, visited Qadian on his tour. This was for the first time in the History of Ahmadiyyat that a government official who was as high in stature just second to the Governor visited Qadian. Perhaps the reason was that the government wanted an introduction to the jamaat and important information about its operation through a reliable source after receiving antagonistic reports about the Jamaat from its enemies. The Promised Messiah^{as} invited them for dinner and also went to his camp to meet the commissioner at his request. The commissioner respectfully met the Promised Messiah^{as} and asked many important questions about the Jamaat. Sir James Wilson was very pleased with his visit.

The Arrival of two American tourist in Qadian

In April 1908, an American gentleman and lady who were tourists in India came to Qadian to meet the Promised Messiah^{as}. They were also accompanied by another American from Lahore. The Promised Messiah^{as} graciously met them and answered their questions. The Promised Messiah^{as} informed them about his claim and explained the Second coming of the Messiah and also told them about a few of his signs. They were highly impressed with the conversation and requested the Promised Messiah^{as} to show them a sign as well. The Promised Messiah^{as} said that if they consider carefully, their coming here was in itself a sign. They asked how? The Promised Messiah^{as} explained to them that a few years before, no one knew him outside Qadian and that at the time God told him that he would gain popularity and people from far and wide would come to meet him. After this he faced a lot of opposition, but in spite of it God fulfilled his promises and their visit to him was also a sign of fulfilment of that prophecy, otherwise who could have imagined someone coming from America to Qadian. They were very puzzled with this reply. Similarly numerous people from Europe also visited Qadian on several occasions.

Visit to Lahore and more revelations about The Promised Messiah's^{as} death

Mother was not well at the time and wanted to see the lady doctor in Lahore. But the Promised Messiah^{as} was hesitant to travel due to unknown health issues. But when mother insisted, the Promised Messiah^{as} agreed to travel. These were the last days of April 1908. On the night between the 25th and 26th of April, the Promised Messiah^{as} received the following revelation:

Do not stay in peace over these games of life (Translated from Persian)

This was a surprising revelation and our younger brother was also not well, hence the Promised Messiah^{as} was reluctant to travel and postponed the trip. But as the revelation did not point to anything specific and considering mother's wishes the Promised Messiah^{as} decided to travel the next day on the 27th of April 1908, once our younger brother was feeling better.

When the enemies received the news of the Promised Messiah^{as} travelling to Lahore, they once again started their campaign by giving derogatory and filthy speeches against the Promised Messiah^{as}. The Promised Messiah^{as} advised the Jamaat to bear this with patience and not to react in any way. This teaching had a very positive impact on decent people and numerous came to visit the Promised Messiah^{as}. On the 9th of May 1908 the Promised Messiah^{as} received another revelation: Depart then depart, God will lift all the burden himself (Translated from Arabic) This was a clear sign of the Promised Messiah's^{as} death, but was not disturbed with this news and continued to work with full zeal. However in accordance with the Sunnah of prophets, the Promised Messiah^{as} moved from his house in order to fulfil the revelation in a literal sense as well. Hence he moved from Khawaja Kamaluddin sahib's house to another devotee Dr Syw Muhammad Shah Sahib's house, which was near by. Some Jamaat members were still distressed by the revelation until the news about the death of a young devotee Babo Shah Deen Sahib came from Qadian, but the Promised Messiah^{as} still believed

that the revelation was about his own death. But the Promised Messiah^{as} continued to work with the same diligence, vigour and zeal to carry out his Divine mission.

Invitation to nobles of Lahore

The Promised Messiah^{as} suggested that as most nobles do not attend public rallies, he wanted to invite them for dinner at the residence and also introduce them to Ahmadiyyat and its message. Therefore, all Muslim nobles of Lahore were invited to a dinner on the 17th of May 1908 and the Promised Messiah^{as} also delivered a speech to deliver the message about his Divine mission. Although the Promised Messiah^{as} was not well that day, he still gave a two to two and a half hour long speech which all attendees listened to with love and intent. When a few of the guests got restless and wanted to have dinner, others told them that we eat food everyday, today we are offered spiritual food so we must benefit from it. Hence in this way the Promised Messiah^{as} fulfilled his duty to spread the message of God to yet another part of the population. The same day the Promised Messiah^{as} received the revelation: Do not rely on this age that passes by. (translated from Persian)

This was another revelation which clearly signalled that the death of the Promised Messiah^{as} was near, but the Promised Messiah^{as} continued working with diligence.

Suggestion of a Public Lecture and the writing of Peghame Sulah

After the speech to the nobles, on the suggestion of some friends the Promised Messiah^{as} decided to give a public lecture and selected "Peghame Sulah" as its topic. In this lecture the Hindus of India were invited to reconciliation by delivering the message that we are all the creations of one God and live in one country so we should not fight each other and live together in peace and harmony. The Promised Messiah^{as} also suggested a practical solution which was that from now on, no one should ever disrespect the religious leaders of any faith and whoever breaks the law should be heavily fined. The Promised Messiah^{as} said that I and all my followers who are approximately four hundred-thousand are ready to affirm that the Rushees mentioned in the Vedas and religious leaders who followed them like Hazrat Krishan and Rachunderji were holy people of God and we hold them in high regard, which all those truly appointed by God deserve. In return we ask all Hindus to affirm that Hazrat Muhammad pbuh is a prophet sent by God to reform the world and refer to him with the same respect that they would give to prophets and holy figures appointed by God. And asked them that they never disrespect the Holy Prophet Muhammad pbuh in any way again.

But unfortunately, before this lecture could be delivered the Promised Messiah^{as} passed away in accordance with the revelations he had previously received. Perhaps it was a message from Allah the Almighty, that the Promised Messiah^{as} passed away in the midst of his work, suggesting that the Divine mission for which he was sent will continue even after his death. Hence a month after his death, on the 21st of June, the lecture was readout in a huge public gathering in Lahore. The lecture was very well received and some Hindus wanted to draft out a plan in the same conference, but others wanted some time to think so was postponed. But if Hindus even agree today, then there is no better way to ensure national harmony and world peace.

Peghame Sulah was the Promised Messiah's^{as} last book which brought the total number of his books to over eighty, which also contains some of the Promised Messiah's^{as} comprehensive books. And the total number of the Promised Messiah's^{as} published advertisements is over 260, some of which consist of many pages.

ACTIVITY Key points on ‘Blessings of prayer’ written by the Promised Messiah^{as} Pages 1-30

Barakatud Du‘a, or The Blessings of Prayer, written by the Promised Messiah (as) in 1893, is a refutation of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s view that there is no such thing as the acceptance of prayer, and that prayer is no more than a form of worship. The Promised Messiah (as) rejects this view and proclaims that Allah hears and accepts the supplication of believers which are offered in humility and sincerity, and that the acceptance of prayer sets in motion its own chain of causes which culminates in the fulfilment of the objective prayed for.

...Sayyid Sahib has the following to say on the subject of the acceptance of prayer: Prayer does not mean that whatever is prayed for will necessarily be granted, for if this be the meaning of acceptance of prayer, two difficulties would arise:

First, thousands of prayers are offered with great humility and in extreme anguish, and yet the wish is not granted. ... The second difficulty is that whatever is going to happen has already been determined; likewise that which is not going to happen has also been determined, and nothing can ever happen contrary to this determination.

Thus the reality of the acceptance of prayer is that it is only a form of worship and it is merely on this account that it deserves merit.

Nevertheless, a great benefit of prayer is that when one prays one’s heart is overawed by the Majesty and Omnipotence of God, and this feeling overcomes all the apprehensions which had been the source of distress, and the supplicant begins to experience forbearance and fortitude.

... Sayyid Sahib says that it is man’s nature to seek help when in distress, and it is due to this natural faculty that he prays without giving a thought to whether or not his prayer will be granted. He prays because it has been ingrained in his nature to seek everything from God.

For instance, if we were to take everything to have been predetermined, it would be as ineffectual to use or not to use medicine as it would be to pray or not to pray.

It is a pity that though Sayyid Sahib has reached old age, the system of Divine order has eluded him and he has failed to understand how Destiny and Predetermination has been closely linked to causes, nor does he understand the deep, indispensable and interdependent relationship between cause and effect.

Prayer, in essence, means a relationship of mutual attraction between a righteous person and his Lord. This means that God’s grace first draws a person towards Himself, and then, through the magnetism of the person’s sincerity, God draws closer to him. In the state of prayer this relationship reaches a point where it manifests wonderful qualities.

It is then that the Glorious God attends to the fulfilment of the desired objective, and casts the effect of the prayer on all the preliminary means, which, in turn, produce the means that are essential for the achievement of the objective.

That is to say, under Divine command, prayer influences the lower and higher strata of the world and sways the elements, heavenly bodies, and hearts of men towards the desired objective.

Prayer is the source of the thousands of miracles shown by Prophets as well as the marvels that have been displayed by the saints to this day.

It was the supplications during dark nights of one who had lost himself in God which caused a revolution in the world, and showed such wonders as could never have been expected from that Unlettered and Helpless one [the Holy Prophet^(sa)].

... God Almighty has never promised to accept all prayers, but has said clearly that He will accept or reject prayers as He desires.

One should also remember that humility and anguish alone is not enough for prayer to be accepted, for it also requires righteousness, purity, truthfulness, perfect certainty, perfect love and perfect attention. Moreover, it is also essential that the object prayed for should not be opposed to the Divine scheme of things and should not be against the welfare of the supplicant, or the one on whose behalf he prays, both in this world and the hereafter. It often happens that although all other conditions have been fulfilled, the object prayed for happens to be against the Divine scheme of things with regard to the supplicant, and no good can come of granting such a prayer. For example, if a dear child of a mother should cry and beg her to hand it a burning brand or a snake, or to feed it a poison which seems agreeable, the mother would never fulfil such a wish.

So long as a prayer is not inspired by full spirituality and a close connection is not established between the supplicant and the person on whose behalf the supplication is made, there is little hope that such a prayer will be accepted.

Think and reflect carefully, if prayer is indeed a vain thing and cannot be a means for the removal of any calamity in present life, then how will it become the means for doing the same on the Day of Resurrection?

But if prayer amounts to nothing and that which has been predestined is bound to happen, then just as prayer is useless for the tribulations of this world—according to Sayyid Sahib—it should also be useless to pin any hopes on it in the hereafter.

In this second book, Sayyid Sahib does not seem to consider Predetermination to be of any importance for he describes everything as having a permanent existence, as though all things have slipped away from the Hand of God and He now exercises no control over their transformation or alteration, ...

Thus in the second booklet Sayyid Sahib has done away with the governance of the True Lord of Destiny over all things to the extent that in respect of their inherent qualities he considers them to be no longer under the will of the Lord of Destiny.

Sayyid Sahib has demanded from a rival of his the criteria for evaluating the standard of a commentary of the Holy Quran. Therefore, I, who consider it my foremost duty to show the way to one who has gone astray, deem it proper to serve him in this aspect as well. It, therefore, needs to be understood that:

The first and foremost criterion for an accurate commentary of the Holy Quran is the testimony of the Quran itself.

The second criterion is the interpretation of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

The third criterion is the interpretation of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

The fourth criterion is to meditate upon the meanings of the Holy Quran with the purity of one's own self, because purity of the self has a certain affinity with the Holy Quran,...

The fifth criterion is the Arabic lexicon.

The sixth criterion for understanding the spiritual order is the understanding of the physical order, for there is complete harmony between the two.

The Seventh Criterion is the revelation granted to saints and the visions of the Muhaddathin.

ACTIVITY Kashti-e-Nuh (Ark of Noah)

Taken from lesson plan MAY 2017:

Questions on Kashti e Nuh (Ark of Noah) (Pages 56-78)

(The answers are taken direct from the book and not paraphrased.)

Q1. The Promised Messiah^{as} explains that God's Kingdom reigns supreme in every respect. Nonetheless, there are two systems of law. Explain.

One law of divine decree governs the angels in heaven, and this makes it impossible for them to commit sin, while another law of divine decree governs the people of the temporal world and gives them the choice of good and evil from on high.

Q2. How can a person save himself from evil?

But when a person seeks strength from God for the power to overcome evil, then with the support of the Holy Spirit he becomes able to conquer his weakness and safeguard himself from committing sin, as is the case with the Prophets and Messengers of God.

Q3. If Kingdom of God is present on earth then why do people commit sins?

Sins are also subject to the divine law of decrees. Thus, even though such people put themselves outside the law of religion, they cannot escape divine providence, that is to say, the law of divine decree. Then how can it be said that sinners do not bend to the yoke of the divine kingdom?